WINTER, 1960

the tower

Alabama College

Montevallo, Alabama

the tower

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CONTENTS

SOPHISTICATED LADY	5	Tom Turpin
FETISH FIGURE	6	Tom Turpin
LOCUST	7	Tom Turpin
NEVERMORE	8	Tom Turpin
MEDALLION RELIEF	9	Tom Turpin
A QUESTION OF	10	Jane Ingram
THE ANIMAL FAMILIES	14	Gary Evans
THURSDAY	16	Mary Ann Scott
POEM	18	Ronda Albright
NONSENSE SONG	19	Angeline Waites
HAPPY MENAGERIE	20	Anne DeCoudres
A SONG FOR AUTUMN	21	Angeline Waites
IMAGINATION	21	Ann Schober
POEM	22	Mary Ann Scott
BIRDS THAT HAVE KNOWN IT	23	Ronda Albright
TIME AND "PROGRESS"	24	Hanna Berger
THE DAY I LEARNED TO FLY	25	Angeline Waites
SHAKESPEARE: WAS HE HE OR NOT?	26	Gary Evans
FINAL REMEMBRANCE	28	Ann Schober
THE MERCEDES	31	Ann DeCoudres
DEPARTURE	33	Mary Ann Scott

We gratefully acknowledge the cooperation and courtesy of the Times Printing Company.

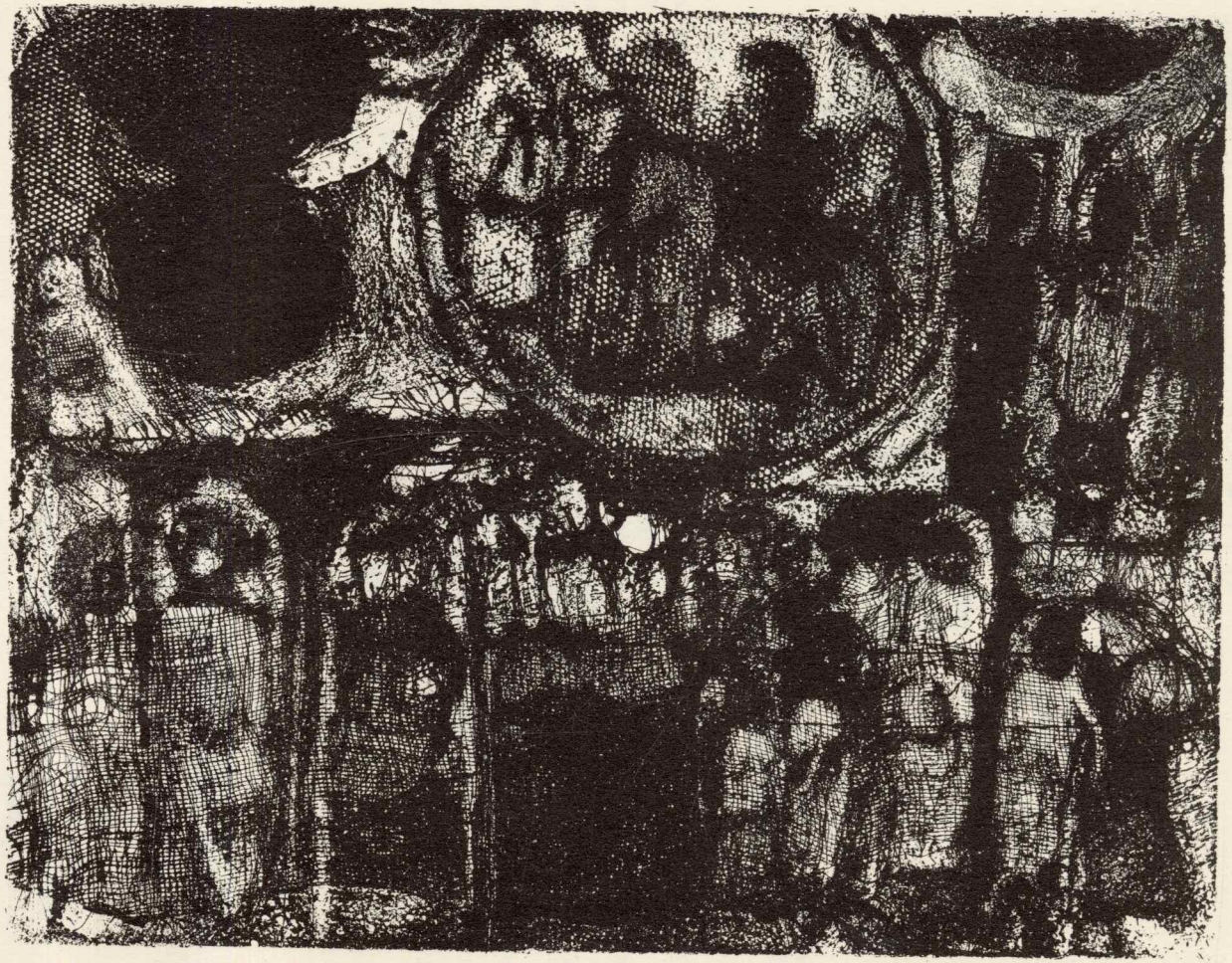
Sophisticated Lady Tom Turpin

Fetish Figure

Tom Turpin

Locust Tom Turpin

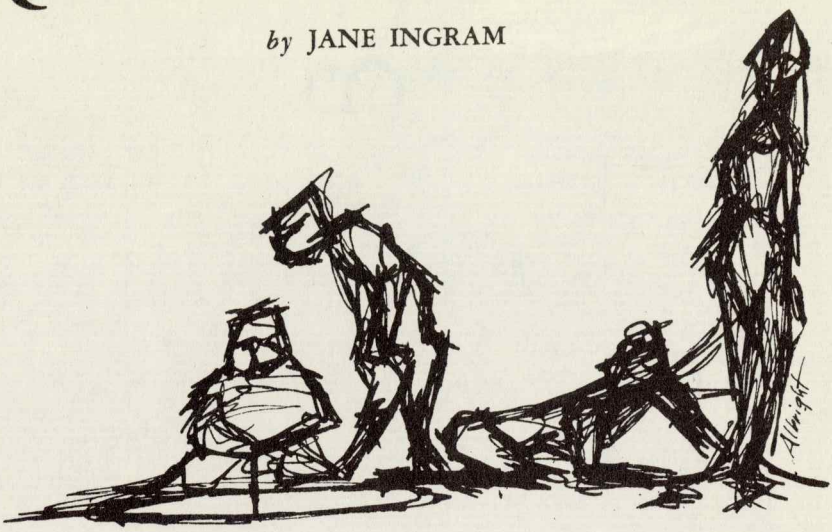
Nevermore Tom Turpin



Medallion Relief Tom Turpin

A Question Of . . .

by JANE INGRAM



Stage is bare except for a traffic light up right. As scene opens traffic light is on yellow, and sounds of city waking up are heard. An Old Man dressed as street cleaner, with the traditional costume and regalia, enters up right and proceeds across stage to down left center cleaning street looking very contented. Several assorted people pass through but are unaware of anything but themselves. Their eyes are in a fixed stare. The Old Man is also unaware of them. As Old Man enters, traffic light turns green. As Old Man reaches down left center, suddenly a large hole appears in the street almost under his feet. He escapes falling in, looks surprised and puzzled.

OLD MAN: This has not been before when I have walked upon this street to clean.
All the days that I have walked and noticed not
This hole within the street. . . .
But maybe it has been here all along. . . .
I know not which it is. . ..
But as for me it has not been before.
Peering into the hole
This hole which is so large and deep
I wonder where the bottom is.
Takes long length of rope out of cart, ties heavy key on end of rope, and starts letting rope down into hole.
I wonder where the bottom is.
I know there is an end to every hole
For everything must end.
I know it does, I know it ends, I know . . .
It does; I will find it.
The Old Man sits down by side of hole and continues letting rope down into hole, his action is becoming almost automatic, and he is staring fixedly into hole. Man enters down left coming down street; he is laughing uproariously as he comes; he almost steps in hole, notices it, then notices Old Man, and begins laughing louder than ever. Old Man does not notice him.

MAN: How in the world did this hole get here in the street? I'm sure it hasn't been here before; I would have noticed it if it had. And you, old man, why aren't you about your work cleaning the street? What can you be doing?
Old Man does not notice question; Man leans over and shakes him.
MAN: What are you doing?
OLD MAN: *looking shocked as if coming out of a dream*
I am looking for the bottom
Of this deep hole
Man begins laughing uproariously again; as he does Young Man enters up right coming down street; in contrast to other characters he notices everything that is going on around him. He comes over to hole, and stands looking at the Man and Old Man interestedly. They do not notice him.
For it did appear miraculously
Before my eyes
Now it becomes my work to find the end
Of this dark hole
I can no longer work at cleaning streets
This is my work. . . .
Man laughs again louder than ever. Young Man looks at him interestedly, curiously, as if he were discovering some new phenomenon. Old Man is still paying out rope; he does not turn head, but asks Man:
OLD MAN: Why do you laugh?
MAN: *laughing* Everything's funny. I find it hard to ever stop laughing . . . at other people and myself . . . *goes off into fit of laughter*
Young Man comes up so close to Man while he is laughing that Man is forced to notice him. Young Man is struck by the novelty of this noise.
MAN: What's the matter, haven't you ever heard anybody laugh? Laughter's natural. . . . *goes off into another fit of laughter*
OLD MAN: *thinks question is addressed to him because he has not yet noticed Young Man*
Sir, I do not mind if you laugh at me
I know what I must do
continues paying out rope
MAN: *bending over to Old Man* But, what if there is no bottom? *Old Man looks shocked at this absurdity; Man turns to Young Man* What do you think?
YOUNG MAN: Nothing

MAN: Is that all you have to say? Nothing else? What's the matter with you?
Man begins to laugh nervously to fill up the silence

MAN: Why doesn't somebody say something? *laughs nervously again, turns desperately to Old Man who is absorbed in work*
MAN: How do you know that hole has a bottom?
OLD MAN: I know. It does. I will find it.
Old Man turns back to work and does not notice them
Man becomes exasperated yet afraid of truth, turns to Young Man.

MAN: Tell him every hole doesn't have to have a bottom. *Laughs nervously* I know there can be a hole with no bottom. There must be . . . it can be . . . *his voice trails off*

YOUNG MAN: *with a sigh* What does it matter?

Old Man looks suddenly up at Young Man as he says this, becomes greatly agitated.

OLD MAN: *In an outburst* All things are most important things
Oh, everything matters. . . .
Nothing does not matter. . . .

Old Woman enters up right. She stops passerby, woman with young child, who has entered down left and is coming across to up right. Woman and Child are hurrying down street noticing nothing.

Nothing. . . .
Everything counts . . . *Stops suddenly, and goes back to paying out rope mechanically*

Young Man looks at Old Man interestedly and curiously, but says nothing.

Old Woman stops Woman and Child. Woman looks shocked at the interruption, hustles Child by protectively, shouting at Old Woman.

WOMAN: You must be crazy. Why, everybody knows which way is up . . . *She is interrupted as Old Woman lays finger aside of nose, makes shooing noise as if to quieten her. Woman and Child move on again unaware of anyone but themselves.*

Young Boy has entered down left, and is walking quickly down the street whistling, noticing nothing and no one around him. Old Woman sees him, goes over to stop him.

OLD WOMAN: Which way is up?

YOUNG BOY: *doesn't stop, looks at her angrily* My mother told me not to talk to strangers. *Stops suddenly, turns around and looks curiously at her* But, don't you know, up is up, up is toward the sky *pointing.*

Old Woman stops him with another shoo. He goes on off again noticing nothing. Old Woman moves on to group around hole who have been staring fixedly into the hole—Man wears an amused grin. Old Woman goes directly to Old Man. Old Man is absorbed in work and does not notice her; she taps him on the shoulder.

OLD WOMAN: Which way is up?

OLD MAN: *hardly noticing her, answers quickly and matter of factly, pointing up* That way.

Old Woman interrupts him with shoo. He again becomes absorbed in letting rope down into the hole. Old Woman turns to Man who is staring into hole with amused grin on his face. She interrupts his reverie; he looks shocked.

OLD WOMAN: Which way is up?

MAN: *laughing* I don't know. One can never be sure of anything these days. It's always seemed that up was that way *pointing to sky* but perhaps it's *pointing down* that way, or that, or that *pointing right and left. . . .*

Old Woman stops him with frantic shoo, leaving him confused. She now turns to Young Man who has been observing her actions since she came on stage with interested curiosity.

OLD WOMAN: Which way is up?
tugging at Young Man who looks curiously at her

OLD WOMAN: Which way is up? *louder*

Old Woman puts finger aside of nose to shoo him, but stops in the process and looks curiously at him.

OLD WOMAN: Oh, for you it is not necessary. Already you are silent.

YOUNG MAN: *speaking warmly to Old Woman* Yes, one can speak when it does not matter. Up is up and no one can tell you. . . . No one can tell. Silence becomes understanding. . . .

All looked up startled as Young Man began to speak. Man breaks into fit of laughter at this, Old Man joins him hesitatingly at first, then loudly. Old Woman turns fiercely upon them.

OLD WOMAN: Stop, stop; why do you laugh? No, no. . . .

YOUNG MAN: *stopping her and comforting her; to others* Laugh if it be funny.

Old Man stops laughing immediately, becomes unaware of anything again. Man gradually subsides into silence.

Old Man is paying out rope mechanically now and all watch him fixedly. At this moment he reaches end of the rope, and the force sends him over into hole. Traffic light turns red. Beyond the first scream of surprise there is no other sound as he falls. All gather curiously around hole and look into it.

MAN: *laughing uproariously now* Well, that's the end of the rope for him.

OLD WOMAN: He is silent as he falls.

MAN: *stops laughing, becomes curious* Yes, he makes no sound as he falls. Perhaps he has already passed hearing distance. *slight chuckle* Perhaps he has already hit bottom . . .if there is a bottom. There must be somewhere. . . . He couldn't fall forever. . . . I wonder where he fell to. . . .

Old Woman breaks stillness by going over to Young Woman who has entered up right and is walking briskly down the street not noticing anyone. Old Woman stops her.

OLD WOMAN: How long is now?

YOUNG WOMAN: *looking curiously at her, then hurrying on, calling over her shoulder* I don't know. Ask someone else.

Old Woman is left alone up right, goes through shooing routine although Young Woman is no longer there, then turns and moves slowly off stage up right.

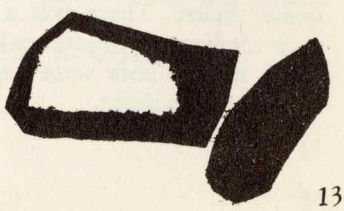
YOUNG MAN: You must begin again.

MAN: *continuing to laugh* Me *stops laughing* Yes, if I'll ever know, I guess I must. I wonder . . . I wonder if . . . *goes over to street cleaner's cart, takes out a tremendously long length of rope, ties key from pocket on end of rope, sits down in same place as Old Man, and begins letting rope into hole. Traffic light turns yellow.*

Man's action becomes automatic and he ceases to become aware of Young Man. Man begins to laugh uproariously at himself as he is mechanically paying out rope.

YOUNG MAN: *with a sigh* How long. How long? *walks off right, traffic light turns green.*

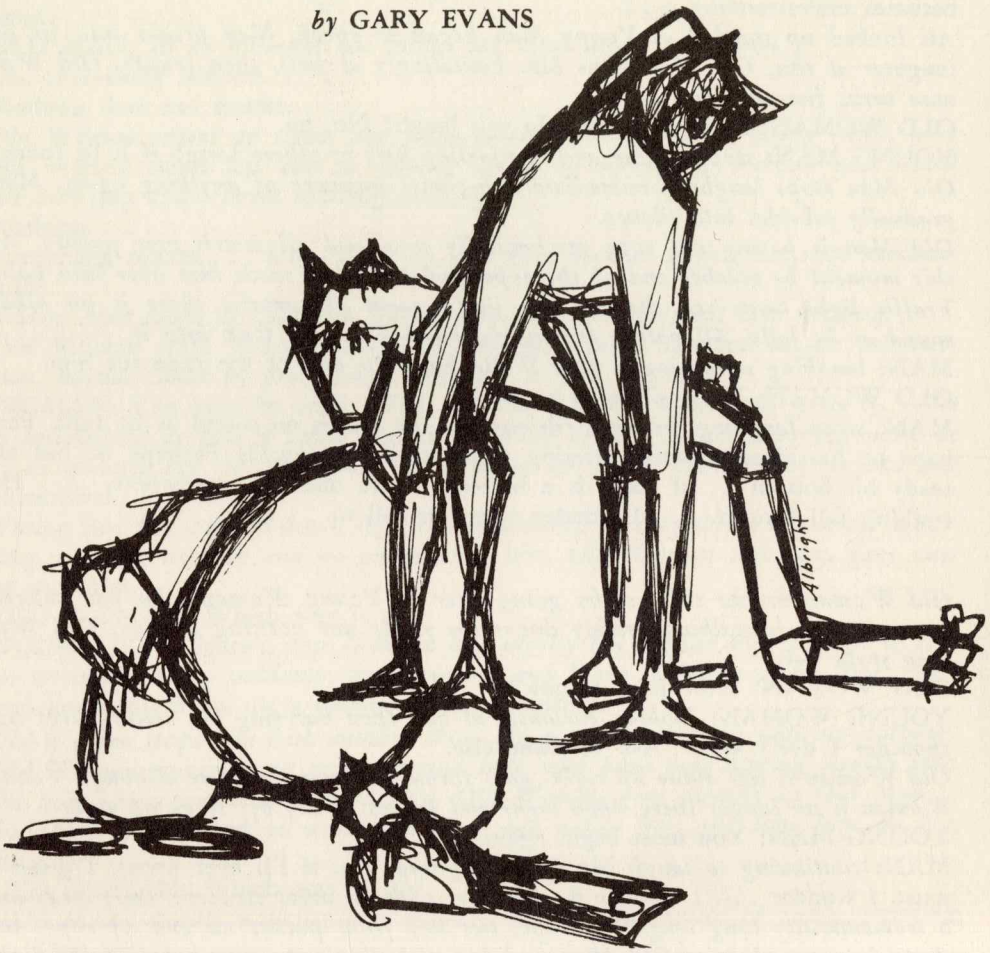
Curtain



The Animal Families: *A Fable*

Subtitle: AND GOD CREATED BEARS—
A Bedtime Story for the Young in Mind

by GARY EVANS



Once upon a time, many, many years ago, there existed on another planet (Unratio to be specific) a world quite similar to ours. To be sure, there were no shimmering concrete cities standing as monuments to man's ingenuity. There were no Fiats, Electras or X-15's. No psychiatrists' offices with wall-to-wall couches existed, nor were there plans for going now and paying later. Indeed the use of fire was then somewhat a novelty.

Yet, strange as it seems in the face of such obvious barbarism, civilization was present. The inhabitants were monogamous, lived as single families in adequate shelter. There was a spoken and written form of communication, as well as a median of commercial exchange. A religion and government had been devised, though both were largely neglected. In short, their way of life was definitely socially civilized.

The most obvious difference between this world and our own was that animals comprised the total population of Unratio. There were all types and sizes represented, but there were four main animal races—the bears, the donkeys, the penguins and the skunks. Naturally, other animals felt that they had a great deal of importance, but the cold eye of history proves that only these four groups were lastingly influential.

For a long period of time, the various animals lived in relative isolation. Vast expanses of land and water served as impenetrable physical barriers and self-interest acted as a psychological barrier to intercommunication. However, with the passing of time, the contours of Unratio became altered so that the seas became rivers and the rivers turned to streams. The bears, donkeys, penguins and skunks were literally thrown together and coexistance became the watchword.

The fascination of one group for another helped to promote a happy relationship among them all for quite some time. The donkeys liked to watch the bears marching along single file through the forest while the bears reciprocated by showing interest in the braying of the donkeys. The penguins found the skunks charming—at a distance, and the skunks admired the penguins' formal wear. Mutual admiration prevailed.

Unfortunately, this happy situation could not and did not last forever. Admiration, respect, and fascination became things of the past. The bears growled when the donkeys got on the wrong side of the stream, the penguins squawked angrily when a skunk threatened to retaliate against trespassing. The world situation was deteriorating.

Being firm believers in the social efficiency of sharing a meal, the leaders of the four families decided to have a picnic together. The day set for the gathering arrived, but unhappily the bear was feeling particularly grumpy, the donkey was feeling his oats, the skunk felt particularly independent, and the penguin was inclined to be very noncommital. It is not surprising that under these circumstances the picnic was doomed to sad failure.

To make matters worse, the bear decided to make some very ugly accusations about the other three animals. He said that the wretched donkey had been standing on his hind legs trying to see where he kept his food supply. He said that the penguin was supposed to have brought the pickles for the picnic and had not done so. He cast his final aspersion on the skunk by saying that it was always raising a stink at the wrong time. Having concluded his paw-pounding tiade, he stamped away to his cave, giving the picnic a rather previous ending.

Not really knowing precisely how to react to the turn of events, the animals responded in decidedly individualistic manners. The donkey put up a brave, braying front. The penguin paced and squawked nervously. The skunk, wishing to seem different, went home, head and tail equally erect.

The condition worsened. Day by day, hope for coexistence faded. Name calling gave way to rock throwing. Tension mounted (no tranquillizers!) Then nerves gave way—a finger pushed the wrong button and the latest, newest, most-dreaded discovery was unmasked. It was called an Ignorance Bomb. Oblivion settled over Unratio. However, as dark rimmed clouds carried the survivors upward, there was still a growl of hope as the bear called out—"We'll beat you to the moon. Wait and See."

The Moral: You scratch the bear's back and he's very apt to scratch yours.

THURSDAY *by* MARY ANN SCOTT

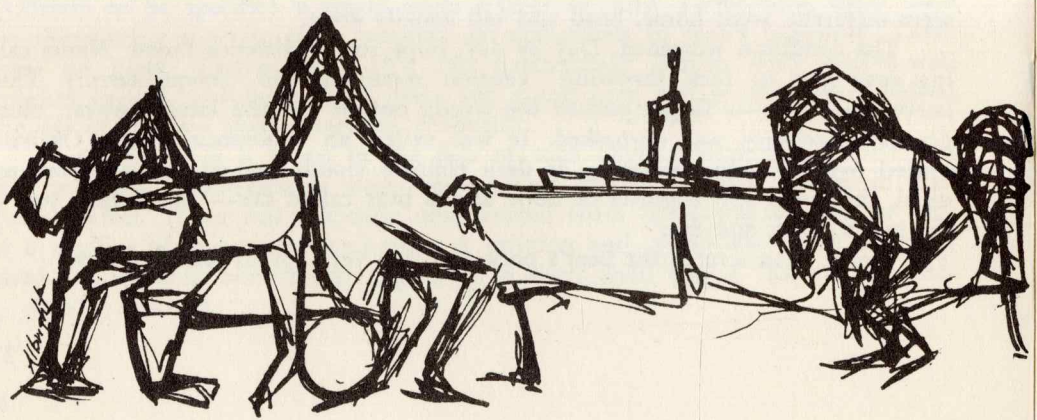
John stood with his feet together, turning his hat round and round in his hands. He had been ready to leave when the call came from the manager's office.

Mr. Harris talked as he finished the day's reports, not even looking up at John. "Now, John, I'd hate to have to let you go. Your mother was one of our most loyal employees and a hard worker. That's why we were glad to have her back when your father died. I guess that was just after you were born. But that's beside the point. I've tried to overlook your mistakes, sort of in your mother's memory, but a company can't operate on mistakes. We're just like a big team, everybody works together. Your job may not be one of the most important ones, but is still has to be done right. As I said before, I'd hate to let you go, but unless you get down to work, that's the only thing I can do. That's all."

John left the office and went to the men's restroom. He slammed the door shut, and looking in the mirror, covered the red spots high on each cheek with his hands. He let his eyes slide out of focus, and the figure in the mirrow became that of Mr. Harris. "You big so-and-so. Calling me down for a few measly numbers out of place. Just wait till I've got the big job, and you're working in the back room. Then you'll come begging me to keep you on."

Feeling better, John washed his face, straightened his coat and set his hat back on the crown of his head. He swaggered out to the front and looked to see if the receptionist had noticed him. She was a tall, smart-looking brunette named Lydia, and John had been trying to work up the courage to ask her for a date for four months. Now, tilting his head to one side, he gave her a broad wink. The girl, however, had only glanced up momentarily and was back at her work without any sign of recognition. John walked on out into the sunshine, thinking, "Her, too. One of these days she'll come crawling to me."

Outside, the streets were filled with late afternoon traffic. A city bus pulled up at the corner, but John paid no attention. He walked the thirteen blocks to his apartment everyday to save bus fare. As he walked, the streets became progressively narrower and dirtier, and children ran through them playing after-school games.



Nearing his street, John came upon a sand-lot football game. As he passed, the ball bounced across the sidewalk in front of him, with a whole herd of dusty, blue-jeaned boys following. John jumped back, turning pale, and when he realized he wasn't hurt, shouted at the boys, "Why don't you watch where you're going? You could have run right over me. Something ought to be done about you kids playing in the streets."

"Gee, Mister, we didn't mean to scare you. We were just playing."

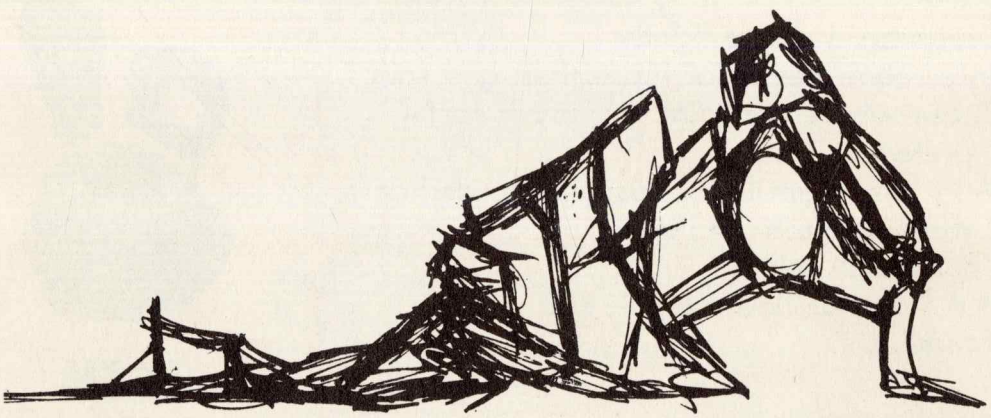
"Scare me! Of course you didn't scare me, but you shouldn't run up on people like that."

John walked on, muttering to himself. He remembered when he was about ten years old, he had wanted to play football, but his mother wouldn't let him. She had held him close and cried and said he was too delicate and fine for such rowdyism. So one day he sneaked off and went over to the vacant lot. The other boys had laughed when he asked them if he could play too. But they said sure, the only thing was he had to be one team and they would be the other one. They put the ball in his arms and told him to run, and he ran and they all chased him and jumped on him at once. When he came home crying, his mother had cried too, and then she put him to bed and wouldn't let him up for a whole day, taking his temperature and giving him aspirin.

John turned in at a big grey house with a sign reading BRANDON'S ROOMS FOR RENT. His mother and Mrs. Brandon had been bosom friends, drinking hot tea and gossiping about the other boarders every night, and nothing would do but that John must stay on at Mrs. Brandon's after his mother died.

He closed the front door softly, so Mrs. Brandon wouldn't hear him and tell him not to be late for supper. The ninth step creaked as he went up the stairs, just like it always did, no matter how he stepped on it. He locked the door to his two rooms, and going to the bathroom, took the almost-full bottle of whiskey out of the medcine cabinet. He carried it back into the other room, sank down on the bed, and raised the bottle to his lips. As he started to take a drink, his gaze fell on the big photograph of his mother on the dresser. There she was, staring at him . . . always staring. He took one big swallow right in front of the picture just to spite her, and then turned the photograph face down.

By suppertime, the liquor had turned from hot to warm, and John floated through the meal, ignoring Mrs. Brandon's reproaching looks. Mrs. Brandon's reproaches always started the same way, "If your mother were here now . . . ", so there was really no use in listening to her anyway.

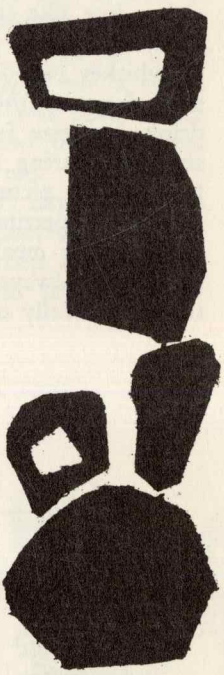


The girl across the table soon began to look very pretty, and John talked to her gaily. She was engaged to the man sitting beside her, though, and didn't seem to hear John. Even the hamburger meat and mashed potatoes started tasting good, (Mrs. Brandon always had mashed potatoes on Thursday), and John pretended that he was really out with Lydia, dining and dancing. But there was really no use in pretending, he decided, when all he had to do was call Lydia and ask her for a date. Probably the only reason she was cool to him was that she was waiting for him to make the first move.

With his best suit on, John went down to the corner telephone booth. Humming to himself, he dialed her number. He had known it by heart for months. The phone rang for a long time. Then there was a click and the receiver said, "Hello . . . . . Hello?"

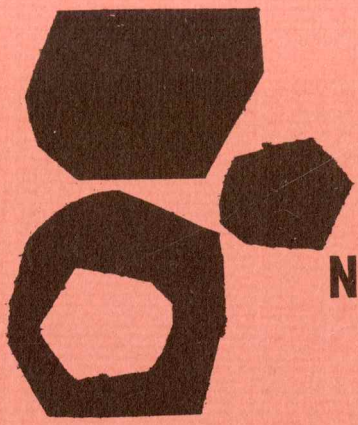
"Excue me. I'm afraid I dialed the wrong number." John put the phone back on the hook and came out of the booth. The warm glow had drained out, and even the buildings laughed as he walked up the street.

Back in his room, John finished the whiskey and took the revolver out of the bedside table. He walked to the window and looked out over the city. He held the gun to his temple and pulled the trigger. The click came, and John stood there a minute and then took the gun back and put it in its drawer. It wasn't loaded. It was never loaded. John was afraid that some day he might hurt himself if he loaded it. He climbed into bed, and holding the photograph in his arms, went to sleep.



Laughing, I dance lightly
In a room meant for more than one soul.
Those who enter think my joy is real—
I pretend.
And when dim lights succumb to darkness,
I want to reach for hands
That match mine.
But I cannot find them – and cry
Tears.

—*Ronda Albright* **POEM**



Nonsense Song

Peppermint is impudent,
And chocolate is suave
I wish I were a queen, I'd go
Arrayed in purple head to toe
In amethyst and mauve.

Licorice is nice to kiss
And caramel is fun;
I wish I were a kite, I'd fly
As high as all the sky is high
And dabble in the sun.

I wish I were a leprechaun
I'd catch a June bug's grin
And sell it for a piece of luck
To sober folks who run amuck
And all their silly kin.

I were I wish a jellyfish
Swimming in the Nile
I wish I were, I were I wish
A dainty crystal serving dish
With candles in my smile.

For almond is quite elegant,
And lemon is just swishing,
And ginger is a spunky spice,
But peppermint is very nice,
And life is for the wishing.

—Angeline Waites

Happy Menagerie

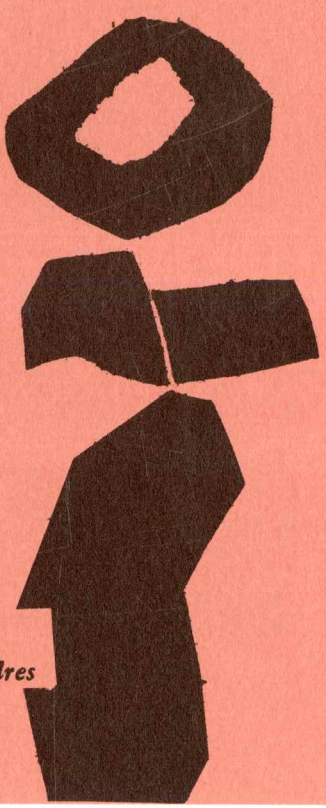
A laugh from a calf
Is worth two and a half
From a donkey
Hyena or such,
But to ask for a laugh
From a solemn giraffe
Is asking a little
Too much.

It's simple of course –
A grin from a horse,
But a whale
Has better to do.
And a grin from a buck
Is stretching your luck
Or outrunning
A fast kangaroo.

An aardvark will smile
If you give him a while
To turn up his
Long, tender snout,
But try for a smile
From a cruel crocodile
And your luck
Will surely run out.

And if you should dare,
Try a wild grizzly bear
But be careful –
Don't stand too near,
For with one sharpened claw
And a sweep of his paw
He could end
Your future career.

—Anne DeCoudres



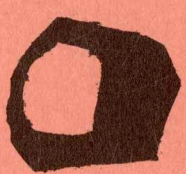
A Song For Autumn

The rain tonight is many restless fingers;
It fondles last year's leaves and strokes the ground,
And enters into it a somber lover.

When I am one year older, I'll forget
The smoky rain assaulting the dark ground
With fierce ardor only rain can have,
With quiet tenderness just rain can have.

When I'm a woman grown,
I'll walk into the world with my umbrella
And laugh at love.

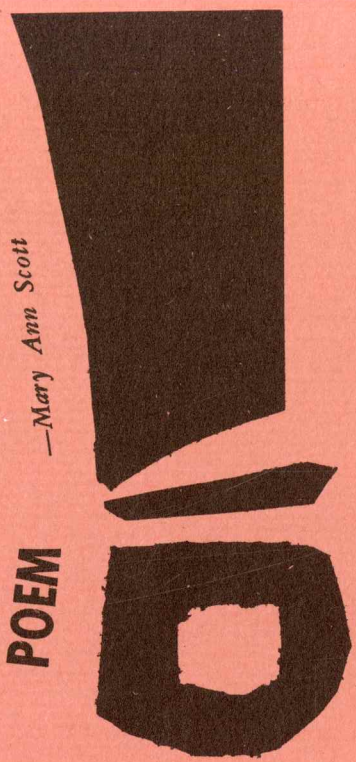
—Angeline Waites



Imagination

Imagination can fill bleak hours
With surprising thoughts and laughing cure
Of youthful acts and solemn expectations
Which crowd emptiness into stagnant corners.
Like a wishing well turned upside down
It rains magic showers, each drop a dream
Which spins briskly into supposed action
And comes out a vivid, living work of mind.

—Ann Schober

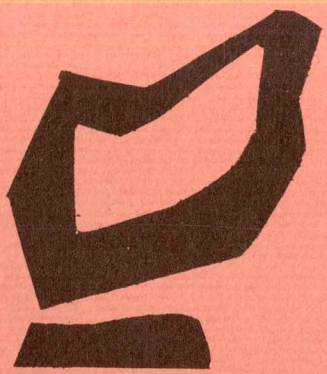


The dream slipped in the window
As I closed my eyes to sleep.
It curled and crept around me—
"I pray my soul to keep."

My prince was tall and handsome,
His charger marble-white.
"If I should die before I wake"
And I closed out all the light.

The hands were soft and gentle;
The people smiling ghosts.
They welcomed me with loving looks,
A multitude of hosts.

Morning threatened with wakefulness.
Its coming I could not postpone—
"I pray thee, Lord, my soul to take"
But my dream had left me alone.



Birds That Have Known It

The barren season has almost come.
Birds that have known it for weeks fly south,
And we question one another for the reasons
of their departure.
Is it to beg sympathies from foreign lands
Or laugh at those left behind – fools
too dense to understand the
coldness of the north
and why it must be.
And we are alone – save for the sound
Of leaves delaying this inevitable fall to the ground.
All around none can hear us when
we plead for words of explanation.
They tell us autumn is a season,
That summer just passed.
Men are known to shake from chilling winds.
We thank them and turn away.
Cold breezes penetrate, but ours is not
physical frigidity.
It comes from other winds other times.
And mankind calls us odd for freezing
when warm houses beckon.
They know not our inability to enter;
They cannot foresee the force that
drives us away.
We will be cold by choice
that wills necessity.

—Ronda Albright

Time and "Progress"

—Hanna Berger

1870—

Harder, push that plow, broken ground – toil, labor
The beating sun, sweat, a minute's rest, then work again – new dress for Carrie
A bubbling spring, a sip of water – Thankfulness
A blazing fire, the children safe – Contentment
A life of work, pain, smiles, tears – life of love, a life with God.

1917—

Blood, sweat, a grim-faced man – determination
Tears, a fellow soldier buried, a letter from home, "The baby is sick, very sick; the bills can't be paid." – Sorrow
The roar of a cannon, an explosion about ten yards away – Fear, prayer
Another letter from home, "The baby is fine now." A picture enclosed, "The dog had puppies; the trees have turned green; I love you." – Hope, faith in tomorrow.

1962—

The freezer is broken, can't be fixed for a week – privation
Another car for the family. That makes three – Success
A Tuesday night western on television – Family life, togetherness
Yet—
A smile from little Bill, a curl flopped over his eye – Tenderness
A starry sky on a summer night – Awe, excitement, even religion
True America versus new America
Living versus existing
Man versus his eternal enemies

2200—

??

The Day I Learned To Fly

The day I learned to fly,
It was a usual day
Small birds went up the sky,
And it was May.

Small sparrows swooped and soared
Far out of sight
Exulting in the miracle
Of flight.

The day I learned to fly,
There was no one to see,
Just yawning sky and sprawling earth
And me.

(They laughed and said "You can't!"
And called me "foolish", "child" –
I listened to them rant
And smiled.)

Alone I climbed the hill
I reached the top alone;
I stood on tiptoe, still
Windblown,

Sunburned; I measured space
Infinities of blue
I closed my eyes and counted ten,
And then I flew.

The day I learned to fly,
It was a usual day
Small fledglings reveled in the sun,
And it was May.

—Angeline Waites

Shakespeare: Was He He or Not?

by GARY EVANS

"Oh come now, doctor. Surely you're not going to be so conservative and parochial. After all, you are a college professor. Where is your sense of academic freedom, your sense of justice? Don't tell me you are going to close your ears to any theory before you have heard the argument."

Looking at me across my rather stereotyped desk in my decidedly conservative office was an excited little man with slightly tarnished gold-rimmed glasses to match his hair. His manner of getting past my student secretary was still unknown to me, since I had threatened to fail her in every possible course if she allowed anyone to interrupt my scholarly endeavors. Had the visitor found me doing anything but reading the funny papers it would have caused less embarassment, but since he had caught me, I was especially anxious to appear interested.

"No, of course not," I hastily countered, "but I hardly see how you will be able to support this belief of yours."

"Why certainly I can. You don't, for one minute, think I'd go off half-cocked, do you? Just you pay attention and you'll soon see what I'm talking about too."

At this point, the little man's voice became very confidential as though he were preparing to tell me about the latest Russian spy activity. His voice cracked with the excitement of his news.

"My interest in the subject was aroused through my work. I'm the curator of the Elizabethan collection at the Hartselle Museum and Waxworks and naturally I am in daily contact with Shakespeare— or rather with a wax figure of him. You'd be positively amazed, I'm sure, at some of the conversations which pass between us."

"I'm sure," I mumbled noncommitally.

"Naturally, he says very little, but he's quite stimulating just by his presence. In any case, during a particularly slow Saturday afteroon—Saturday is one of our best days, you understand, but this one was quite slack because of the rain or something—well, at any rate, for some unknown but now seemingly guided reason I picked up a folio edition of the Bard. You know, the one with the funny printing and strange spelling and Shakespeare's picture right on the front. As many times as I had glanced at the old boy, I don't see how I missed really. After the discovery, all the pieces just began to fall into place."

By this time I was thoroughly mystified by the conversation. Somehow I was still struggling through the visits with the old wax and Saturdays. However, feeling that it was only polite to let him go on, I placed my head firmly under the axe.

"I hate to seem dense in the face of such an obvious truth, but I am afraid you will have to tell me what you found."

"Oh, of course, how careless of me. I don't know yet why, perhaps the gray afternoon or something, but my attention was rivetted on his nose. You know how angular and flat it looks all at the same time."

Although I had never payed a great deal of attention to anyone's nose, I hated to interrupt. Therefore, I managed to contain my enthusiasm as he plunged on in his exposition.

"Well, I said to myself, I've seen that nose somewhere before. But where was it? Then out of the clear blue sky up popped the nose. And do you know whose nose it was?"

"Your own?" I asked hopefully.

"Of course not. It was Queen Elizabeth's nose. The queen was Shakespeare, or vice versa."

"But that's absurd," I protested. "Look more closely at the picture and you'll see that the face has whiskers. Besides," I added, looking for a clear refutation of his theory, "the head is half bald."

With quiet condescension and mildly fluttering eye lids, the curator continued. "Do you think that Elizabeth would have taken a chance on being found out. The mustache is obviously a disguise. As for the bald head, mentioning that points up your ignorance of Elizabethan history. It's a proven fact that Elizabeth I was bald at the age of eighteen and possessed approximately 943 wigs.

"But, but even so," I quickly pointed out, trying to save my name from any further damage, "even allowing that this might be so, surely you are not implying that the Queen of England could or would write bawdy jokes."

"My good man," again he used the nursery school tone, "historians do not call this period the 'golden age' for nothing. The queen didn't reign for fifty years on her good looks."

Catching the informality of his remarks, I said, "I must say, Bess must have been the life of the party if she could tell stories like that." Then, as I realized

my irreverance, I felt it wise to revert to my stereotype. "Now that I think of it, it would make more sense for a woman to dedicate her sonnets to Mister W. H."

"Oh, yes indeed. In fact there are many such crystal-clear answers involved in my theory." The little man's nose twitched in answer to my support.

"What about the dark lady though? It seems illogical that a woman would describe a mistress."

"Any simpleton can see that those descriptions of wiry hair and droopy eyes are pure, unadulterated scorn."

"You might just have a point there. And, of course, accepting this woman theory clears up that business of Essex in the Queen's bedchamber. Certainly she was best qualified to write about it."

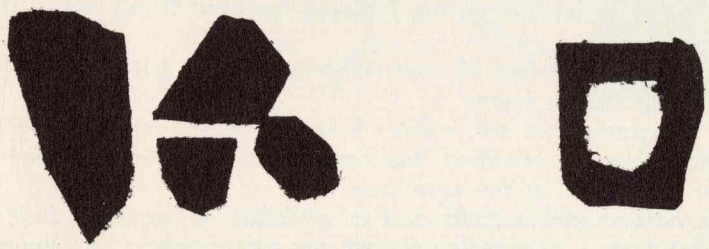
At this the little man jumped to his feet and made nimbly for the door, his coat tails flapping in protest.

"Where are you going?" I demanded, sorry to see my audience go.

"To the library—immediately."

"But what for?"

"To prove that Queen Elizabeth wasn't a woman. If she were, why would she be excited when a man came into her bedchamber unannounced."



Final Remembrance

by ANN SCHOBER

Julia's well-trained eye made a sweeping but thorough survey of the linen closet at the Schultz Hotel. Her years of experience made her immediately spot a few misplaced tablecloths among the sheets. She made a brief notation on her memo pad and fastened the schedule for the next day on the bulletin board.

"Not too bad for a beginner," she remarked to herself. "She's not the sort of person to be as conscientious as good old Hannah—God bless her dear soul—but with a little more . . ." Julia mumbled a few more thoughts about the new girl's possibilities and continued her weekly inspection.

"How's that radiator working, Mr. Hybenisky?" she inquired of the bearded, bent old man as she met him in the hall.

"The radiator is working fine now, Miz Waultz, but my hot water drips all day and night and I . . ."

Julia broke in before he could complete his sentence. "I'll see to it right away. I'm on my way right this moment to report it."

She smiled inwardly as she thought about the old man's regular complaints. Next week it would probably be a crack in the ceiling again or maybe a squeak in the bed springs.

As she turned the corner on the fifth floor, she collided with a bellboy who was piled high with baggage.

"Glad I bumped into you, Mrs. Waultz." Realizing what he had said, he started fumbling with the suitcases on the floor. "I mean uh . . . that's really not what I meant to say. I meant to say uh . . . I'm terribly sorry. Honest, I am, but . . ."

Julia smiled assuring him that it was okay and that it was as much her fault as his.

"What I'm trying to say is that Mr. John told me if I saw you to be sure to tell you to stop by the desk before you go home tonight. I think you have a telegram or something." Apologizing again, he picked up the luggage and made his exit quite hurriedly.

Julia glanced at her watch and decided that it was about time for her to leave anyway. She buzzed for the elevator and went directly to the desk.

John made a few of his usual comments about the happenings of the day—Mrs. Fitz's delicate poodle had the sniffles and there was a new lady in 208. He handed her the telegram and said that it just arrived. She tore it open and started reading.

"Is anything wrong, Mrs. Waultz?" he inquired when he noticed that the paper was shaking in her hands and that there was a very strange expression on her pale face.

"Just help me to a chair, John. I'll be fine in just a moment or two."

Julia sat silently and just stared into the nothingness that seemed to now exist around her. She didn't really feel anything. There wasn't any way of describing how she felt inside. It had been so long and now it was all over.

Finally, she told John to get her hat and coat. She didn't notice that a slight mist was in the air; she didn't even hear the old lady who was selling flowers on the corner say "Good evening, Miz Waultz." Her mind was far, far away in her past.

I know you don't approve of Konrad, Mother. We have discussed the matter a hundred times. We are going to be married, and you can't stop us no matter what you or Father say or do! I'm not going to listen, I tell you. He's not a nobody who wants to take advantage of my family's position. I know him and I love him. Can't you try to understand how . . . Don't you think that house is too large for just the two of us. There's a small one near . . . Yes, we do want to have children and . . . Whatever you say . . . I'm sorry, Konrad. The doctor said he didn't understand either. In a few years maybe we could adopt a . . . Don't talk like that. You can get a job at another firm . . . Konrad, I got a job at Schultz's Hotel today and . . . Don't say that! Please don't . . . Not again tonight! But you know we never see each other anymore. I'm gone all day and you are always going here or there every night. Couln't we . . . Konrad, you know you shouldn't drink so much. Don't look at me like that . . . You are a nobody. Don't you come near me ever again. You're a drunkard . . . a drunkard . . . a drun . . . And that woman . . . that horrible woman! Get out . . . Get out . . . out. You're nothing . . . nothing . . . noth . . . No, Hannah, I haven't heard from Mr Waultz for months. Order some new napkins; these have . . . It was bad the last time he came. He threatened to . . . You! Why did you come here? Get out of the way, Hannah. He's out of his mind. Give me the gun, Konrad . . . Don't shoot! Pleas . . .

Julia didn't see the little girl running toward her. She didn't realize that it was her little niece, Helen, until she was in her arms and talking loudly and excitedly in her ear.

"Auntie Julia, Mother said I could come and live with you and keep you company and help you do things. I can. I really can."

Julia hugged her tightly. "Yes, darling, you can be my little girl, and I need you so. I need you now more than ever."

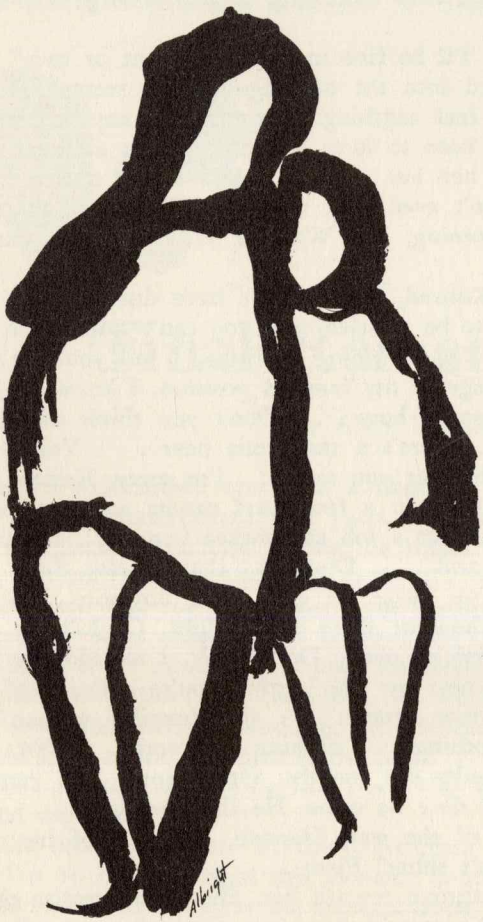
Julia's hand crumpled the telegram that she had held so firmly on her long walk home and dropped it to the sidewalk.

"What's that, Auntie Julia?" Helen asked.

"Something that must be forgotten, sweetheart," she answered.

She took the little girl's hand and walked toward the massive, white house. She knew that she could never forget; she would remember everything—even that final telegram.

KONRAD WALUTZ DIED TODAY AT THIS INSTITUTION. HIS DEATH WAS RULED WILLFUL SUICIDE CAUSED BY SUFFOCATION.



THE MERCEDES

by ANNE DeCOUDRES

Alfred Pennybrook squeezed in a seat next to a fat lady on the subway. He looked at her out of the corner of his eye and glanced about him suspiciously. Then he cautiously drew a colorful folder out of his briefcase. His eyes lighted with stolen pleasure and he hungrily devoured the gaudy advertisements of the 1961 Mercedes-Benz. There on the third page was the exact model he wanted: canary yellow convertible with black upholstery. He closed his eyes and he was driving down the Outer Drive . . .

The traffic was thick with the slaves of the giant, Business. They poured forth from the all-day parking lots with one thought in mind—home, and freedom from the chains of the eight-hour day.

Mr. Pennybrook drove casually through the Chevrolets and Fords in his sleek, canary yellow Mercedes. He lit his pipe and readjusted his silk scarf around his neck—that breeze off the lake was a little cool today. In the lane to his right he noticed an attractive blond with sexy green eyes. She was looking at him in her rear-view mirror. Slowly he closed one eye in a languid wink. Then he pressed the accelerator and left her behind with a mighty surge of power.

Almost too late he noticed the warning red of the brake lights on the car in front of him. The tires squeeled in anguish as the Mercedes came to a hurried, jolting stop . . .

The jolt snapped Pennybrook back into the atmosphere of the subway. His station. He half ran to the door and barely got through before the jaws jerked shut behind him and the monster roared on into the darkness of the tunnel.

Alice was waiting in the car. She started in before he could even open the door.

"Hurry, Alfred, I left the beans cooking on the stove and I don't want them to burn."

Glumly Pennybrook thought to himself, beans again and they're *always* burned! More than likely hamburger, too. This is Wednesday and we always have hamburger on Wednesdays.

"Kathy's gone to a birthday party, and I have to pick her up at seven. Junior had an appointment with the dentist and has been complaining all afternoon. And Johnny has been underfoot every time I tried to do anything. Honestly, you just don't realize how lucky you are to go off to the office every day and just have coffee breaks, one after the other!"

Pennybrook didn't argue with her. He was too tired and too helpless. It wasn't worth the effort anyway. He never won any arguments with Alice.

Supper was the same. He ate his hamburger and burned beans to the constant chatter of Alice and the children. Complaints, whining, nagging. Pennybrook didn't enter in. After long years of experience his ears automatically shut out the noise and his mind wandered to the attractive blond with the sexy green eyes.

"Alfred, you're not even listening to me, are you. I asked if you got the folder from the car dealer."

Pennybrook smiled guiltily to himself. He thought of his beautiful car on page three. Then he said apologetically, "No, I forgot. I'll get it tomorrow on the way home from work."

"Never mind now. We'll just go down Saturday and tell them what we want, since we've already decided on the brown station wagon."

We? *You* decided on the brown station wagon, Pennybrook thought. It's a dark color and won't show the dirt when the cat walks on it with her muddy paws. And we need a station wagon for the kids, and their friends, and the dog. Year after year after year—station wagon after station wagon. Brown after brown. Alice liked Brown.

"Yes, Alice, the brown station wagon."

"Mercy, it's almost seven-thirty! I'm going to bridge club, Alfred. Please wash the dishes and straighten up."

"But Alice, I have all those mid-week reports to do and I did plan to watch Perry Como."

"The one night a week I get to go out and you begrudge me that much. I slave all day in your house and you expect me to continue at night, too."

My house. Since when is this my house. You picked the lot, you decided on the house plan, and you decorated the inside. *My* house?

"I'm sorry, Alice. I should have remembered that this is your bridge club night."

"And don't forget—Johnny needs a bath; he played in that mud puddle in the back yard all day. And help Johnny with his math—he's having trouble with fractions again."

It was ten o'clock before Pennybrook finally had time to sit down and do his report. Junior's problems were worked, Johnny had had his bath and had given Pennybrook one also, the bathroom was mopped and drying, the cat was fed and put outside for the night (Pennybrook had found her curled up in a warm ball on the foot of his bed), and the children were all in bed, having put on their countenances of sleep.

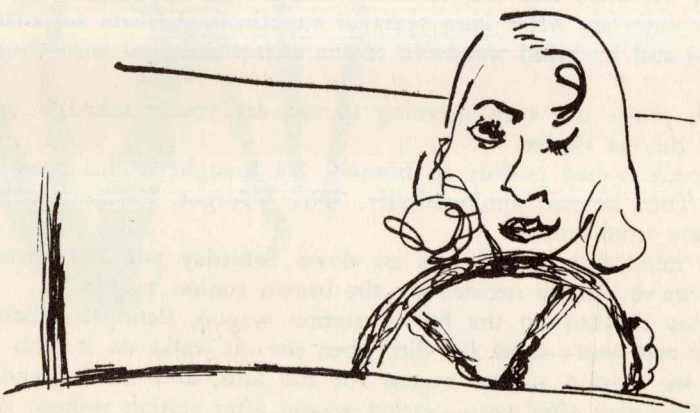
Pennybrook wearily finished the last report and snapped on the television, just in time to see the Lone Raider shoot the Outlaw Kid with the seventh bullet from his six-shooter, and the show ended. At this point a well-dressed man with an Ipana smile frozen solid on his face announced the fabulous new 1961 Mercedes. Pennybrook leaned forward in his chair and fastened his greedy eyes on the screen. The announcer described it in his smooth T. V. voice as it circled on a huge turntable.

"The realization of every man's dream," he went on, "is the smart, sleek 1961 Mercedes Benz."

It was that moment that Pennybrook decided.

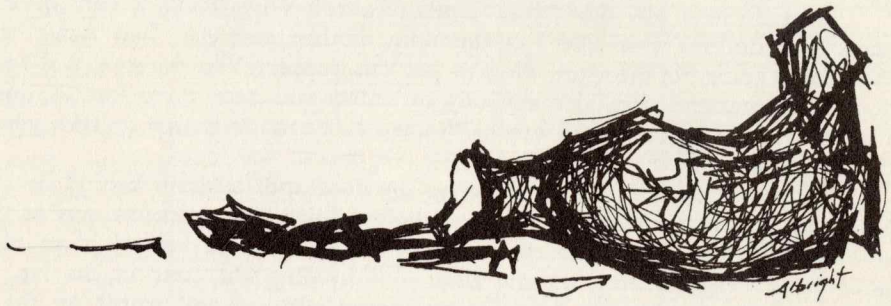
The Outer Drive was jammed with cars seeking the balm of a quiet, oil-smelling garage in a peaceful suburb. The din was deafening, but to Pennybrook it was sweet music compared to the roar of the subway.

Across in the next lane he saw an attractive blond eyeing him in her rear-view mirror. He winked slowly, then shifted to second and the canary yellow Mercedes shot past with a burst of unleashed horses.



DEPARTURE

by MARY ANN SCOTT



The cheap-looking yellow vase flew across the room at the head disappearing through the door, hit the bed, and miraculously fell to the floor without breaking. The huge Negro woman walked heavily to the vase, picked it up and heaved it at the door, this time smashing it into tiny pieces. A low laugh rumbled up from somewhere in the mass of dark flesh, and the woman bent to pick up a broom lying on the floor. As she began to methodically sweep up the pieces, a dark, thin little boy crept half-way through the door to the other room.

"Come on out, James Walter. That truant officer's gone now. Don't you worry. Nobody's going to take you away from your Aunt Tallie."

She swept the pieces of plaster-of-Paris up on a newspaper and, carrying them to a box in the corner, threw them in. The area around the door where the vase had broken was startlingly clean compared to the rest of the two-room apartment. The little bit of light that came in the dusty windows of the fourth-story walkup made the dark room a fitting background for the two dark figures.

The little boy stood in the kitchen door watching as the woman began to walk around the room picking things up.

"I don't see why everybody wants to take my baby away from me. I can take care of you just as good as anybody. Next they'll be trying to put you in the orphanage. Well, I lived with your mother and daddy three years and I know they wouldn't want anybody else to have you. Besides, you like being my little boy, don't you?"

The boy lowered his head over the teddy bear in his arms and walked to the window.

"And that's another thing. If they put you in school, nobody would know what you were thinking about. Now, we don't need any sign language or writing or anything like that. I know just exactly what you want to say to me, even though you can't talk out loud. Like right now—I know you want to thank me for chasing that man off that was trying to take you away. That's all right, Baby, I'll take care of you."

She picked up a cloth and began to dust the two miniatures which sat on the table beside the bed.

"Ever since the accident, I've taken good care of you. I know me and your mother didn't get along so good sometimes—she shouldn't have kept nagging me about Joe. Your Uncle Joe was a good man—he couldn't help it if he had the wandering bug. But I love you just like your mother and daddy, and if they were here right now, they'd say I was the one to keep you."

She dropped the cloth and walked over to pick up the boy. He still held the bear tightly, but submitted to the embrace.

"You do love me, don't you, James Walter? Why, that's a silly question. I know you do. It's just like I'm the only mother you ever had now, isn't it? Well, I'm going to the store now to get our supper. You be sure and lock the door after me, and don't let anybody in unless you hear three knocks, just like I always do. We don't want any policemen or anybody to try to take you away while I'm gone."

The boy obediently followed her to the door and locked it behind her. When he could no longer hear her footsteps going down the stairs, he ran across the room to the wash-stand and stooped down, pulling from behind it an old, tattered book. Then, sitting on the floor and holding the bear in his lap, James Walter began showing his bear the wonderful pictures and words on the pages of his hidden treasure.

* * *

"James Walter, stop mooning out the window and come sit in my lap. I'll rock you and tell you a story like my mother used to do me before the baby came along. But just wait until your Uncle Joe comes home. He'll know lots of stories. He'll be back any day now; I know he will. He didn't really want to leave; he just thought he wanted to go south. But he'll come back and live with us soon."

The boy sat in her lap and leaned back, and she began to rock.

"You're such a beautiful boy. That's because your mother was beautiful too. She was always the pretty one, and popular. Nobody ever said I was beautiful. Except Joe—before we were married, he always used to—Who's that? Run hide in the kitchen, James Walter. It might be that man trying to take you away again."

The boy ran to the kitchen with his bear, and after peering suspiciously through a crack, the woman opened the door. A tall, smiling man, hat in hand, stood in the hall.

"Come in, Mr. Sanders."

"Good afternoon, Tallie. How are you? I just thought I'd stop in for a little chat this afternoon."

"James Walter, your granddaddy's here. You can come out and talk to him for a minute."

"No, Tallie, I want to talk to you this afternoon, about that same little matter. I hate to be this way about it, Tallie, but if you don't let us have the boy, we're going to bring it into court. He needs to live where he can be around boys his own age and go to school. And we're going to scrape up the money somewhere to take him to a doctor. I know you love him, Tallie, but he needs to be with other people, too. Now, we'll be over tomorrow morning to pick him up; and I mean it this time, if you don't let us have him, we'll call the police. Goodbye, Tallie, we'll see you in the morning."

She closed the door behind him and walked to the kitchen.

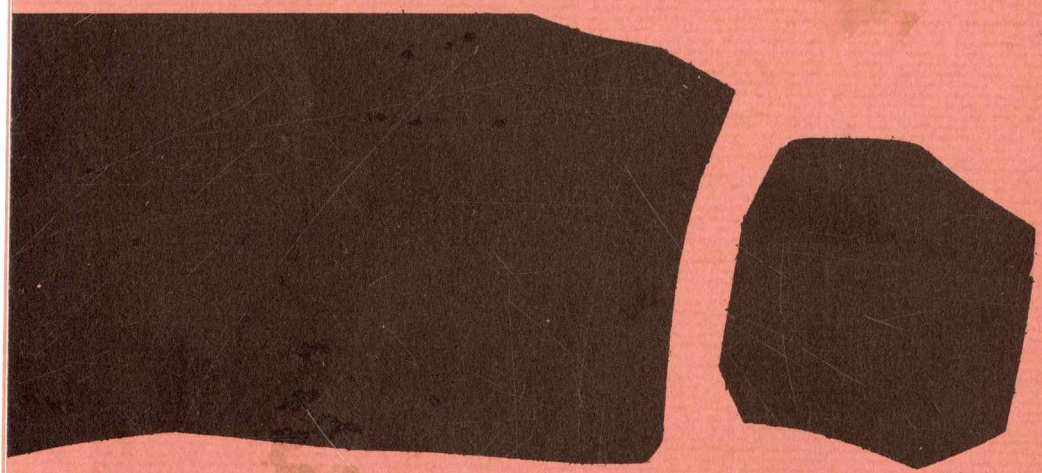
"It's all right, now, Baby. It was just your grandaddy teasing us again."

The boy sat on the edge of the bed with his bear in his arms and a paper sack at his feet. He had stuffed his clothes in the sack himself, because his aunt was washing the breakfast dishes. She had just laughed at him and said nobody was going to take her baby away. Now the knock on the door brought her into the front room.

"Good morning, Tallie." The man and woman smiled brightly. "Is James Walter ready?"

"He's talking to his bear again. You'd better not bother him. I have to finish the dishes. Maybe you could come some other time." Tallie walked back into the kitchen.

When she closed the door, the boy ran eagerly to his grandmother, holding up his paper sack and nodding. The man started toward the kitchen hesitantly, then stopped, picked up the boy, and he and his wife walked out, carrying the boy and his bear.

Aunt Tallie finished the dishes, swept the floor, and bustled around the apartment cleaning up. She dusted the miniatures again, holding each of them in her hand for a moment. Then setting them down, she went to sit in the rocker. "James Walter, I wish you'd quit eternally mooning out that window. Come here and hug your Aunt Tallie and I'll tell you about the time your Uncle Joe and I went to a carnival."

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